

MONTANA'S TREASURE STATE ENDOWMENT PROGRAM

2007 Biennium Projects *Project Administration Manual*

Montana Department Of Commerce

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May 2005

INTRODUCTION

As you begin the task of preparing to start up and implement your Treasure State Endowment Program (TSEP) project, it is completely understandable that you may have some concerns about the responsibilities you are taking on and how to go about meeting them. However, the same skills that you used to compete successfully for a TSEP award will help you through the process of implementing your project. We suggest that you follow a step-by-step approach through the various requirements covered in the TSEP Project Administration Manual, similar to the process you followed in preparing your TSEP application.

Try not to be intimidated by the volume of the manual. In contrast, to federally-funded programs, such as the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, which are subject to a wide variety of federal laws, regulations and executive orders, administering a TSEP project is comparatively straight forward. As a general rule, whenever federal and state requirements both apply to a situation, the more restrictive requirements govern. If your TSEP project will also be funded with federal funds, the frequently more restrictive federal requirements will usually supersede those of the state. Consult with the TSEP liaison for your project if any questions arise.

As you get into the details of this manual, you will see that because it is written to cover a variety of situations, it covers a number of requirements and procedures that may not apply to your project at all. In many cases, a particular requirement applies only once and will not have to be dealt with again. In addition, whenever possible, we have provided sample forms and formats for letters, reports, resolutions, and many of the other administrative requirements you will have to comply with under state law and regulations. We hope that the materials we have provided will make the process of complying with state requirements as easy as possible.

We have tried to make the written discussion of the various requirements very complete for a reason. In these times of tight budgets and increasing workloads, it is impossible for TSEP staff to provide on-site technical assistance as often as we would like. However, we have found that we can successfully work through most administrative problems over the telephone by using the text and the sample materials as references.

Compliance with the various requirements attached to any governmental program is the trade off for doing business with public funds. Viewed individually, the general goal of each requirement usually makes good sense. Few of us would argue with the need to avoid serious environmental impacts from government funded projects, to avoid collusion or conflicts of interest in government procurement, to assure proper management of public funds and to assure that workers on public projects receive full wages for a day's work.

Note to Tribal governments

Tribal governments are expected to abide by the same requirements expected of other TSEP grant recipients. On a case-by-case basis, the TSEP staff will consider modifying the requirements to fit the unique situation of a tribal government.

The need for ensuring compliance with state requirements is a responsibility the Department of Commerce must and does take seriously in its monitoring and supervision of local TSEP projects. However, to the extent possible, the Department's oversight of local TSEP projects is committed to simplifying project administration and working with local officials to either prevent problems or correct them before they become serious. Our end goal is to assist you in successfully completing your TSEP project with a minimum of difficulty.

We look forward to working with you on your projects. Please call us if we can be of assistance.

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